

For what it's worth, I wanted to share how net neutrality (or rather the lack of it) has affected me in recent years. I followed that up with my general thoughts and concerns with the current net neutrality situation. In case it isn't clear from reading this, I am in favor of continuing to classify ISPs as telecommunications carriers under Title

2013-2014 – Because Verizon wanted to shake Netflix down for the privilege of providing me video streaming services, the quality of service for Netflix dropped such that it became unusable depending on the time of day for at least six months to a year. The bitrate for streaming videos dropped to about 1Mbps most of the time. Never mind that I had a subscription for Verizon FIOS that was supposed to afford me access to the Internet at 75Mbps. Verizon purposefully neglected their interconnects with Netflix's content delivery network, effectively sticking Netflix in the 'slow lane' until they paid up.

2013-2014 – Connectivity between my home with a Verizon FIOS connection and my Amazon Web Services server started to degrade for no apparent reason. Because I had connectivity at work from multiple ISPs, I verified connectivity through another ISP (in this instance, Comcast) to my AWS instance was superior, even though the subscription for that service was supposed to be inferior to my home FIOS subscription (the plan was for 20Mbps at work, but at home again I had purchased 75Mbps connectivity).

2016-present – T-Mobile decided to automatically opt my cellular Internet service account in to a mobile video rate-limiting scheme that negatively affected all video viewed through my smartphones. Video quality was impacted negatively, noticeably with some sites, and for others that didn't support whatever coding schemes that T-Mobile was able to reach in and alter enroute, they became unusable. I was luckily able to opt-out again after I figured out the situation, but the fact that they thought it was OK to examine my Internet traffic to then alter the quality of service and/or content I was being provided, frankly, sickens me. This is the same sort of system that all the domestic mobile telecoms seem to be engaging in recently. The fact that these ISPs have competing video on demand services doesn't make them flinch in their bids to negatively affect their competition.

2012-present – About a year after I purchased my first Android phone, and then purchased my second, directly from T-Mobile, I found that they had installed software on it that blocked its built-in ability to tether to another device to provide an Internet connection. Never mind that I have been purchasing an "unlimited" data plan since I purchased my first smartphone. Let me make clear - **when I purchase Internet access, my intent is to obtain the ability to send and receive any data I wish through the provided connection. Where the data originates or is destined should make no difference to the provider of that connection.** I expect that they will provide a good faith attempt to facilitate transfer of information between my connected devices and the IP addresses to which I am attempting to communicate. I was able to connect my laptop to my first Android phone to use my mobile data connection, but from 2012 on I had to revert to using my original phone or modifying my new phone to make what should have worked from the start, work. This has affected me less in recent years as I've stopped purchasing phones that T-Mobile modifies in a negative way. But, I have no *good* option for service, and as such continue to purchase it from them to this day.

Only direct Internet access is acceptable - My experience with The Internet started around 1992, when I started using America Online, CompuServe, and other similar services for brief stints using dial-up modems. Before this, I was only able to use my modem to find billboard services to which I could dial in and exchange content with others that had dialed into that same service previously. When I went to

high school I learned that there was a great plethora of content that was freely accessible and to which I was free to contribute if I only learned how to set up a web server and write some HTML. I very quickly dropped use of these semi-walled gardens in favor of a connection for Internet access only. Eventually, AOL became something of a laughingstock amongst anyone with any technical background whatsoever. (And for good reason – why would anyone want to pay to be kept locked in a censored system when there is an alternative?)

I don't want bundled services – Traditionally, ISPs that I have used have provided some form of email access to me. And traditionally (since ~1996 or so) I've disregarded any ISP-provided email access in favor of a solution that isn't tied to my ISP. I've been using Hotmail, for instance, since whatever Israeli company that originally created it, created it. When I used MSN briefly after its inception, I still only used it as a dumb Internet pipe. I don't want or care to be locked-in to using some video-on-demand service (for instance; really this applies to anything being provided aside from Internet access) from an ISP, as I've seen that most of the services available don't compare in terms of software quality or in terms of affordability to what is available on The Internet already. Why would ISPs want to sacrifice profit margins when they could just hinder their competition and frustrate their users enough to get them to drop Netflix, Hulu, etc. and purchase something they know their ISP will ensure works for them? Why would anyone in their right mind want to tie the responsibility for providing content to their ISP? That's just inviting more headache when they go to access that same content from a mobile device, or when traveling.

There is really no competition - I still pay money to the company that I consider to be one of, if not *the*, worst offender, when it comes to an outright disregard for the principles of net neutrality. (Verizon, for reference.) I do this because I used the alternative provider for several years and got fed up with the way that they were attempting to negatively impact my ability to use The Internet, through data caps on "unlimited" service which as far as I'm aware, still exist to this day. Comcast would boost the speeds but leave caps where they are, forcing me to monitor my own usage and make decisions on whether to download a game, watch Netflix, or do nothing, based on where I stood for that month. Verizon's caps are much higher, but they have less reliable connectivity to sites on The Internet, due to their 'slow lane' thinking. I could purchase access from a satellite provider, but let's face it – that isn't a solution, as the quality of service, price, and bandwidth for such service generally pulls it out of being an option.

What counts as 'broadband' – Over time, I've found that the way I thought of broadband has changed. Starting out in 2000 or so, I thought of broadband as really anything faster than dial-up. Time progresses and technology improves, and by 2005, I'm thinking of broadband as somewhere around 5 Mbps down, 1Mbps up. Fast-forward to 2017, and I'm thinking of broadband as at least 20Mbps down, 10Mbps up. The point that I'm trying to make here is that 90% of the world's data has been created in the last two years. If we want to maintain access to the same ratio of the world's data over time, then the rate at which we can download and upload that data needs to improve at the same rate. Obviously when the only goal of your company is to make money, it is not of interest to you to improve users' ability to access content; it is of interest to you to make accessing that content more expensive.

I'm a republican, and I'm disgusted – This is not something which should matter in this conversation, but I feel I must say it. I have voted for every republican that has appeared on every ballot I've submitted since I was able to vote. Until this last election, I've been happy with those decisions. I knew when I was doing it that I was being forced to choose between a constitutional right to keep and bear

arms and the government's support of the principles of net neutrality. I didn't expect what's playing out right now to be happening, and I am utterly disgusted to be having to do anything to support what should be a no-brainer for anyone with some intellect. I'm sorry to say that I'm unlikely to vote republican this November, even though it makes me sick to think about taking that route. I'm *absolutely* not voting for Donald Trump again in the next presidential election. Aside from the idiotic missteps he's been taking since entering office, really it's what's going on in the current FCC – and the way that republican lawmakers seem to be “pissing on me and calling it rain” that has destroyed my confidence in this party.